

Message Text

PAGE 01 REYKJA 00178 291456Z

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ACTION SS-30

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S E C R E T REYKJAVIK 0178

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO COMICEDEFOR, CINCLANT AND SECDEF

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, IC, NATO

SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION NEGOTIATIONS: MEETING WITH FONMIN AGUSTSSON

REF: REYKJAVIK 0174

1. SUMMARY: REFTEL IS AN INDICATION OF THE MUDDLED THINKING IN THE GOVT AND AMONG POLITICAL LEADERS IN ICELAND OVER THE DEFENSE FORCE ISSUE. ANYONE CAN DEVELOP ALMOST ANY KIND OF "RUBE GOLDBERG" DEFENSE STRUCTURE BY THE QUESTIONS ONE ASKS. THE ONLY CONCLUSION TO BE REACHED SO FAR IS THAT SOME SORT OF DEFENSE STRUCTURE WILL BE TOLERATED BUT THERE IS NO AGREEMENT EITHER WITHIN THE GOVT OR WITHIN ANY OF THE GOVT POLITICAL PARTIES AS TO THE NUMBERS OF MILITARY THAT WILL BE PERMITTED TO COMPOSE THAT STRUCTURE. USG TACTICS OF "CAUTIOUS RESPONSIVENESS" AND "FLEXIBILITY" WHICH ENABLES THE GOVT LEADERS TO PROLONG THE TIME WHEN A DECISION HAS TO BE MADE STILL SEEMS TO BE APPROPRIATE. WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO LOOK WITH CONCERN AT DEVELOPMENTS SINCE PARTY POLITICS RATHER THAN OBJECTIVE SECURITY INTERESTS SEEM TO BE DETERMINING THE DEFENSE ISSUE. THIS TELEGRAM DESCRIBES MEETING I HAD WITH FONMIN AGUSTSSON MORNING OF JAN 25 WHICH PRECEDED THE TV PANEL DISCUSSION RELATED*IN REFTEL. END SUMMARY.

2. FONMIN ASKED ME TO CALL ON HIM JAN 25 FOR PURPOSE OF PRE-SECRET

PAGE 02 REYKJA 00178 291456Z

SENTING TO ME IN WRITING HIS PROPOSED SOLUTION TO THE DEFENSE FORCE ISSUE. AT MEETING HE SAID HE WAS TO APPEAR ON TV PANEL THAT EVENING AND WANTED TO SAY THAT HE HANDED COUNTER PROPOSAL TO AMERICAN AMBASSADOR FOR CONSIDERATION BY USG AT NEXT NEGOTIATING SESSION WHICH HE WOULD THEN SPELL OUT ON TV.

HE REMARKED THAT PROPOSAL WAS STRUCTLY HIS OWN AND DID NOT YET HAVE APPROVAL OF THE GOVT, OR THE OLL (VALDIMARSSON'S PARTY) OR EVEN HIS OWN PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PP). HE HAD PRESENTED IT TO ALL THREE AND ALTHOUGH THEY ARE STUDYING IT HE FELT SURE THE COMMUNISTS AND OLL WILL TURN IT DOWN, AND THAT IF HIS OWN PP ACCEPTED PROPOSAL, IT WOULD BECAUSE OF JON SKAFTASON'S "INTRANSIGENCE" BE ON CONDITION THAT IT WAS FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY WITH USG AND NOT AN ULTIMATUM. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE WAS SUBMITTING PROPOSAL BECAUSE HE WAS UNDER CRITICISM FOR NOT HAVING ONE AND THAT HE WOULD NOT EXPECT USG TO ACCEPT IT. HE WOULD EXPECT, HOWEVER, THAT WE WOULD "TAKE IT UNDER ADVISEMENT" WHICH WOULD MAKE A MARCH NEGOTIATING SESSION NECESSARY. HE WOULD EXPECT US TO MAKE COUNTER PROPOSALS. HE SAID PERHAPS BY THEN WE MIGHT BE LUCKY AND THE GOVT MIGHT FALL. IF NOT, WE COULD PROBABLY PROLONG THE NEGOTIATIONS INTO AN APRIL SESSION, BY WHICH TIME IF THE GOVT DID NOT FALL, THE PARLIAMENT WOULD PROBABLY RECESS FOR THE SUMMER. HE SAID THE IMPORTANT FACTOR IS THAT EACH SIDE MUST CONTINUE TO MAKE PROPOSALS AND COUNTER PROPOSALS SO AS TO INDICATE THAT "PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE."

3. FONMIN'S PROPOSALS AS MENTIONED TO ME WERE AS FOLLOWS:

(A) ALL PERMANENT MILITARY FORCES TO BE WITHDRAWN BY DEC. 31, 1976 IN STAGES. ONE-THIRD EACH YEAR.

(B) ROTATIONAL AIR UNITS OF ABOUT 450 MEN WOULD BE PERMITTED TO OPERATE IN AND OUT OF ICELAND.

(C) ABOUT 200 MILITARY AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL PLUS ABOUT 50 CIVILIANS WOULD BE PERMITTED TO BE STATIONED IN KEFLAVIK TO SERVICE THE ROTATIONAL UNITS.

(D) ICELANDERS WILL TAKE OVER OPERATION OF ALL RADAR AND RADIO FACILITIES.

SECRET

PAGE 03 REYKJA 00178 291456Z

(E) THERE WILL BE A JOINT MILITARY-ICELANDIC POLICE FORCE SECURITY GUARD PERMANENTLY STATIONED AT KEFLAVIK TO PROTECT FACILITIES, COMPOSED OF ABOUT 500 MILITARY AND ABOUT 100 ICELANDERS.

(F) ICELANDERS WILL PROVIDE ALL HOUSEKEEPING AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES.

(G) CIVILIAN AND MILITARY AIR TERMINALS WILL BE SEPARATED.

4. FONMIN FURTHER STATED THAT TO ACCOMMODATE THOSE SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES NOT PUBLICLY KNOWN WE CAN TALK HIM INTO INCREASING THE NUMBER OF MILITARY TO ABOUT 1700 BUT THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE HIDDEN IN THE ACTIVITIES MENTIONED ABOVE.

5. I TOLD FONMIN THAT HIS PROPOSAL WAS PREPOSTEROUS. I ALSO STATED THAT IF HE MENTIONED DEADLINES AND FIGURES ON THE TV SHOW HE WOULD BE NAILING HIMSELF SHUT IN THAT NOW ALL-FAMILIAR BOX HE FREQUENTLY SEEMS TO FIND HIMSELF IN. THE RESULT OF A LONG CONVERSATION THAT THEN ENSUED WAS THAT HE DID NOT MENTION DATES OR NUMBERS ON THE TV PROGRAM AND HE DID NOT HAND OVER THE PROPOSALS TO ME IN WRITING. SINCE THERE ARE NO SECRETS IN ICELAND IT WILL NOT BE LONG BEFORE SOME OF THIS LEAKS OUT TO THE PUBLIC. ESPECIALLY SINCE THE FONMIN'S PROPOSALS ARE EXPECTED TO BE DEBATED IN THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE THIS WEEK.

6. FONMIN WAS HIS USUAL FRANK SELF WITH ME ON UNDERSTANDING THIS CONVERSATION IS KEPT LIMITED AND NONE OF IT IS DIVULGED TO ICELANDERS. HE ALSO STATED THAT IF HIS PROPOSALS ARE SUBMITTED TO USG AT FEBRUARY ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS THEY MUST BE GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION AND WITHOUT REGARD TO OUR CONVERSATION.
IRVING

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED COMICEDEFOR, CINCLANT AND SECDEF.

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